

WELCOME TO CHORUS NORTH SHORE!

Welcome to Chorus North Shore, the premiere choral group on the North Shore. We're happy to have you join us, and we look forward to meeting you. This booklet has been prepared to help acquaint you with Chorus North Shore. Whether you are new to the chorus or have sung with us for years, you will find it a useful source of information.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CHORUS NORTH SHORE

The Chorus originated in 1931 when the Sandy Bay Historical Society sponsored a concert of Christmas carols at the First Congregational Church. Members of four choral groups -- the Community Carol Choir, the Finnish Choir, the Rockport High School French Club and the Swedish Glee Club -- joined in a community concert that was hailed as "a pronounced success" by the Gloucester Daily Times of December 21, 1931. From this simple beginning, the Community Carol Choir was formed with 32 singers. Soon after, the choir reorganized as the Rockport Community Chorus. After 64 years of growth drawing singers from every community on the North Shore and as far away as New Hampshire and Maine, the chorus again changed its name in 1995 to Chorus North Shore to reflect the broad scope of its members and audience.

Sonja "Sunny" Pryor started as Director in 1962 and retired in May of 2023, she developed a chorus that performed master choral works with internationally known soloists. She has conducted in nine foreign countries and led choral tours throughout Europe and the Caribbean.

The Chorus has also grown in its musical skills, now presenting two or three major performances a year with a broad repertoire ranging from the great classical masterworks to the best choral works of the 20th century. Many members of the chorus also have traveled abroad extensively, performing in England, France, the Czech Republic, Ireland and Italy, including a performance at the Vatican, which was broadcast on Vatican radio. In 1997 Chorus members performed to enthusiastic audiences in Luquillo and Ponce, Puerto Rico. In 2004, 37 singers toured Eastern Europe performing in Venice, Italy, Ljubljana, Slovenia, Graz and Salzburg, Austria. In 2006 chorus members performed in The Netherlands, Belgium, and France. Chorus members toured and performed in Milan, Como and Venice Italy.

Chorus North Shore's current Artistic Director is Abby Frost. Abby Frost serves as the Director of Choirs at Ipswich High School. At IHS, she conducts the Ipswich High School Concert Choir, Bel Canto Treble Chorus, and Chamber Singers, teaches class guitar, and Theory, and serves as Music Director for the spring musical.

Ms. Frost also has extensive experience as a *director, vocal coach and musical director* for opera and musical theater productions; she has served as Music Director for productions at Ipswich High School, Hamilton-Wenham Regional High School, Miles River Middle School, Manchester Summerstage, and Stebens Children's Theater, and served as chorus master for Luther College Opera Theatre.

Ms. Frost has presented at the All-State Convention for the National Association for Music Education and for the Massachusetts chapter of ACDA, and she served as *guest conductor and clinician* at the state and regional level with singers of all ages.

Ms. Frost served on the MassACDA State Board as *Repertoire and Standards Chair for Middle School*. Prior to her time in MA, Ms. Frost has led singers in the Tucson Girls Chorus, the University of Arizona undergraduate choirs, public schools of Mason City, Iowa, and sacred choirs in both Tucson, AZ and Decorah, IA.

Ms. Frost earned a *dual music education/performance degree* from Luther College (IA), a *Masters in Choral Conducting* from University of Arizona, and National Board Certification. A native Minnesotan, Ms. Frost lives in Ipswich with her daughter.

Despite its growth in size and musical expertise, the Chorus remains a community chorus in spirit, open to all who wish to join in our commitment to presenting choral music of the highest caliber.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Our concert repertoire is always exciting and challenging. Performing members of the Chorus and our audience have come to expect concerts of outstanding musical quality. To maintain this level of excellence, we ask that all members make a commitment to attend all rehearsals and concert dates.

Our season is divided into two "semesters." Members may join in September to sing in the December concert and in January to sing in the May concert. Members are expected to attend all rehearsals, held at Ipswich High School in the Choral Room from 7:00 to 9:00 pm on Monday nights. As the High School follows a holiday calendar, alternative rehearsal locations will be announced in advance. Plan to arrive in time to sign in, be seated and ready to sing promptly at 7:00 pm and always plan to stay for the entire rehearsal as all the music that we go over is important to our programs.

To perform at your best, plan to attend all rehearsals. Attendance is taken each week via the sign-in sheets. Please make sure to sign in every week! If you miss more than three rehearsals for any one concert or if you miss a dress rehearsal, you will need permission from the conductor to perform in that concert.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Chorus North Shore, like all other non-profit cultural organizations, relies on the financial support of its members and friends to sustain it. Production costs, salaries for our director and accompanist, fees for professional orchestra and soloists, rehearsal and concert hall rental, music scores and many other costs, are covered in part by dues paid by performing members. Annual dues of \$75 per "semester" (\$150 for the 2-concert year) are payable in full at the beginning of the semester. For new members, dues are \$45 for the first semester and \$75 thereafter. Students do not pay dues. All dues for all members are due on or before the third rehearsal of the semester. Sorry, no refunds will be given. Reminder: Dues are tax-deductible.

Dues relief can be arranged for anyone needing financial assistance. Please speak with the treasurer on a strictly confidential basis. (treasurer@chorusnorthshore.org).

MUSIC

We expect that you buy your music so that you can highlight your part and mark it permanently in any way that's helpful to you. If buying your music is impossible because of a financial burden, please see the Chorus Librarian, or one of her Music Committee members. If you will be borrowing music, please make notations in pencil only. Also, remember to return borrowed music to the Librarian at the end of the concert or when you leave, if you decide not to continue attending rehearsals.

SECTION LEADERS

Each voice part has a Section Leader whose most important duty is keeping the master score for that section. If you miss a rehearsal or have questions about the musical notations, or the Artistic Director's requirements for that part, see your Section Leader upon your return.

If you do not have Internet access, your Section Leader will call if a rehearsal is cancelled due to weather.

Section Leaders and their contact information is in the Membership area of the website, www.chorusnorthshore.org – the password is sunny.

WEATHER CANCELLATIONS

If school has been cancelled for Ipswich High School, then rehearsals are cancelled. An email will be issued to the chorus as a whole in the event of a cancellation, usually by 4pm of the day in question. Please make sure we have your most current email information on file. If you do not have email, your Section Leader will contact you. Be sure to give your contact information to your section leader. If there is any question, please contact info@chorusnorthshore.org

PARKING

Parking for rehearsals at the High School is the school parking lot. At concerts, parking is at a premium. We ask that you carpool and please park in outlying spaces, leaving closer spaces for our audiences.

SIGN-IN

Please sign the attendance sheets when you arrive for rehearsals. We keep track of your attendance asking that you try to miss no more than three rehearsals in a semester.

TICKET SALES

Each member is asked to try to sell tickets to the concerts. Several weeks prior to each concert, members will pick up an envelope containing tickets. Please make every attempt to sell these tickets. Return all money and unsold tickets to the ticket coordinator no later than the evening of dress rehearsal.

PENCILS

Always bring a pencil with you to rehearsals to record our conductor's notes in your score. Pencil is always recommended since the conductor may change directions from one rehearsal to another.

REHEARSAL BREAKS & REST ROOMS

We take a brief break about halfway through our rehearsals. Rest rooms are in the main hallway area. Please do not leave the rehearsal at the break!

SET UP and CLEAN UP

Your help with setting up before rehearsal and cleaning up the rehearsal room after rehearsals is greatly appreciated. We want to remain respectful of the space we use. Your help setting up risers and chairs for our concerts is also important!

FRAGRANCES

With a large chorus, we rehearse and perform in close quarters. Please be considerate of your fellow singers by using ONLY fragrance-free cosmetics, lotions, hairspray, etc.

WEBSITE

We keep the website updated with notices, rehearsal and performance dates and other information. It is a good idea to check it before leaving for rehearsals. In addition, you can pay dues, register, purchase tickets, and merchandise through the site, and find contact information in the Members area (password: sunny). Explore the site – it's a great resource!

GOVERNANCE

Chorus North Shore is managed by a Board of Trustees that is elected annually by the membership at an Annual Meeting. Officers of the Board are elected by the Board at the first board meeting after the Annual meeting.

COMMITTEES

Although the elected Board of Trustees is responsible for policy decisions and dedicates many hours keeping our organization running smoothly, all members are encouraged to volunteer to help on a committee. It's a great way to get to know other singers and to offer your time and talents to accomplish the many tasks required to run our organization. Consider offering your help on any of the following committees:

- **PRODUCTION:** Many hands are needed to transport, set up, and take down risers and chairs for our concerts.
- **PUBLICITY:** Working with our Publicity Committee to distribute posters, flyers, and press releases is a great help in advertising our concerts.
- **CONCERT PROGRAM PRODUCTION:** Assisting the Program committee to produce a concert program including program notes, ads and donors.
- **FUNDRAISING / GRANT WRITING:** All members of the Chorus are on this committee since everyone is encouraged to support the Chorus financially by selling program advertising, concert tickets, adding

names to our fundraising list, and participating in other fundraising events. If you have experience in grant writing or would like to help research and respond to grants, we'd love to hear from you!

CONCERT ATTIRE

Stage presence is an important aspect of any performance. Our standardized concert attire presents a uniform appearance that complements our ensemble performances.

- Long (**to the ankle**) solid black skirt or long black dress pants. Full legs, no tights or slim pants.
- Plain black scoop or V-neck top with 3/4 sleeves. (no ruffles or adornments)
- Black shoes and opaque black hosiery (no sandals)
- No jewelry except stud earrings.

OR

- Black tuxedo, long-sleeved white shirt, black cummerbund, black bow tie
- Black shoes and socks

FINALLY

Please feel free to ask any questions! You'll find members who have sung with us over 50 years sitting next to someone who has joined. Whatever your experience, we welcome you and hope you will enjoy singing with us!